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THE
HISTORY
OF
ROMANCES.



THE HISTORY OF ROMANCES.



THE HISTORY OF ROMANCES.

AN

Enquiry into their *Original*;

Inſtructions for Compoſing them;

AN

Account of the moſt Eminent

AUTHORS;

With Characters, and Curious Obſervations upon the Beſt Performances of that Kind.

Pierre Daniel Huet

Written in *Latin* by HUETIUS;

Made *Engliſh* by

Mr. *STEPHEN LEWIS.*

——juvat integros accedere fontes,
Atque haurire. *Lucr.*

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THE PREFACE.

THERE *is not any Speculation, which affords a more agreeable Pleaſure to the Mind, than that of beholding from what Obſcure and Mean Beginnings, the moſt Polite and Entertaining Arts have*

425968



THE HISTORY OF ROMANCES.

Hence it appears, that the Original of ROMANCE *is very Ancient; ſince this Way of Promoting Virtue has been received in the Earlieſt Ages; as is evident from the firſt Records of Mankind. And as it ſtands very remote from Modern Ages; ſo, That it is found out, muſt be an High Satisfaction to the Curious in Antiquity.*

Upon this Account, They are very much indebted to the Labour and Penetration of Huetius; *who has, with the greateſt Accuracy and Judgment, traced the Subject he undertook to Illuſtrate, till he found it in its*

its Infancy, involved in the Umbrage of Fable, *and perplexed in the Folds of* Myſtery *and* Riddle.

This Task was enjoin'd Him (He *informs us,*) *by his Acquaintance and Friend, Monſieur* Segrais; *a Gentleman very intimately verſed in all Polite Learning; and admirably well qualified, to Diſcern and Judge, upon the Subject of* ROMANCES; *ſince He had diſcover'd himſelf to be a Compleat Maſter in the Art, by ſeveral inimitable Productions of that Nature, which he publiſhed in the Language of his Country: A Country, Famous for all Sorts of*

his Accurate Diſquiſition into the Original *of* ROMANCES.

For if it has not improved, It has certainly enlarg'd his Fame; becauſe It is Recommended to the World, in Two of the moſt Extenſive Languages Known in it; I mean, Latin *and* French: *So that I have no great Reaſon to fear its being well received in* Engliſh: *Eſpecially ſince* Romance *has of late convey'd it ſelf very far into the Eſteem of this Nation, and is become the Principal Diverſion of the Retirement of People of all Conditions.*

And

And (tho' we have been hitherto, for the moſt part, ſupply'd with Tranſlations from the French) *it is to be hoped, that we* won't *any longer ſubſiſt upon* Reverſe; *but that ſome* Engliſh Genius *will* dare *to Naturalize* Romance *into our Soil; which (I don't doubt) it will agree with, as well as that of a Neighbouring Country; ſince we are acknowledg'd to be very Ingenious, in Improving Foreign Inventions.*

To promote this Deſign, the Reader will find in the following Treatiſe, the Beſt Inſtructions for Compoſing ROMANCES, *with all Neceſſary Diſpoſitions*

poſitions for the Perfection of the Art. *And becauſe the only Way to a* Right Judgment *upon our own, is to Compare them with the* Performances *of other Men; Our Author has, with Great Perſpicuity and Clearneſs, illuſtrated the Beauties, and pointed out the Deficiencies, of the Beſt Productions of this Kind; and, according to the Direction of the Poet,*

——miſcuit utile dulci.

HOR.

I have no more to add, by way of Preface; *but to hope the* Original *has not ſuffer'd, by Tranſlation into* Engliſh: *If it has;*

has; This, I preſume, is not the firſt Caſe, where a Good Deſign has aton'd for ſome ſlight Imperfections in the Proſecution of it.

THE

CORRIGENDA.

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THE ORIGINAL OF ROMANCES.

SIR,

YOUR Curiosity and Desire to be inform'd of *The Original of Romances*, is both Reasonable and Natural, since you Excel in the Art of Composing them. I

wiſh I may diſcover the ſame Perfection in the Hiſtory I now ſend you of 'em.

At preſent my Books are not with me, and my Thoughts are taken up with Matters of a very different Nature. I am ſatisfy'd of the Labour and Difficulty of ſuch an Attempt, ſince 'tis neither *Provence*, nor *Spain*, as ſome are of Opinion, that we ſhall find to have given Birth to this agreeable Amuſement: We muſt in the Purſuit of it, enquire into the remoteſt Countries, and derive our Account from the moſt Latent Part of Antiquity. However, I muſt gratify your Requeſt, ſince our continu'd and ſtrict Friendſhip gives you a Right to demand, and diveſts me

of the Power to deny you any Thing.

The Name of *Romance* was formerly extended not only to Proſe but Verſe; *Giraldi* and *Pigra*, in their Treatiſes *de Romanzi*, ſcarce mention any other, and lay down the *Bayardos* and *Arioſte* for Inſtances of their Opinion. But the Cuſtom of this Age prevails to the contrary; ſo that we eſteem nothing to be properly *Romance* but Fictions of Love Adventures, diſpoſed into an Elegant Style in Proſe, for the Delight and Inſtruction of the Reader.

I call them Fictions, to diſcriminate them from True Hiſtories; and I add, of Love Adventures, becauſe Love ought to

be the Principal Subject of *Romance*. It is required to be in Prose by the Humour of the Times. It must be compos'd with Art and Elegance, lest it should appear to be a rude undigested Mass, without Order or Beauty.

The principal End of *Romance*, or at least what ought to be so, and is chiefly to be regarded by the Author, is the Instruction of the Reader; before whom he must present Virtue successful, and Vice in Disgrace; but because the Mind of Man naturally hates to be inform'd, and (by the Influence of Self-Conceit) resists Instruction; 'tis to be deceived by the Blandishments of Pleasure; and the Ri-

gor of Precept is to be ſubdued by the Allurements of Example. Thus we regulate our own Defects, and at the ſame Time condemn them in others.

Thus it appears, That the Entertainment of the Reader, which the Ingenious Romancer ſeems chiefly to deſign, is ſubordinate to his Principal Aim, which is the Inſtruction of the Mind, and Correction of Manners; and the Beauty of a *Romance* ſtands or falls according to its Attention to this Definition and End.

'Tis with an Account of this Sort that I ſhall endeavour to entertain you, and I hope your Curioſity extends no farther.

I ſhall not therefore in this Place take *Romances* in Verſe, much leſs *Epic Poems*, which beſide the Difference of their Style, are compos'd of very different Eſſentials which diſtinguiſh them from *Romances*: Tho' in ſeveral Reſpects there is a great Relation between them; and according to *Ariſtotle* (who informs us, That 'tis Fiction rather than Verſe which makes a Poet) a Writer of *Romance* may be reckon'd among the Poets. *Petronius* tells us, That Poems are to move in a great Circumference by the Miniſtry of the Gods, and Expreſſions vaſt and audacious; ſo that Firſt, They may be looked upon as Oracles throughout, from a Spirit full of

Fury, and then for a faithful and exact Narration.

Romances preſerve a much greater Simplicity, and are not ſo exalted, nor have the ſame Figures in Invention and Expreſſion.

Poems have more of the ſublime, though they are not always confined to Probability. *Romances* have more of Probability, though they don't advance ſo far toward the Sublime.

Poems are more regular and correct in the Frame of their Contrivance, and receive leſs Addition from Events and Epiſodes than *Romances*, which are capable of theſe Acceſſions, becauſe their Style is not ſo elevated, and they don't ſo far di-

ſtend the Intellect, ſo that they give it leave to admit a greater Number of different Ideas.

In ſhort, *Poems* make ſome Military Act, or Politic Conduct, their Theme, and only deſcant upon Love at Pleaſure; whereas *Romances*, on the contrary, have Love for their Principal Subject, and don't concern themſelves in War or Politicks, but by Accident. I ſpeak of Regular *Romances*, for thoſe in Old *French*, *Spaniſh*, and *Italian*, have generally more of the Soldier than Gallant.

This induced *Giraldi* to conceive, That the Name *Romance* was derived from a *Greek* Word, ſignifying *Force* and *Strength*, ſince the Performances in that kind

made

made it their Buſineſs to Illuſtrate and Diſplay the Valour and Atchievements of the *Palladines*; but *Giraldi* was miſtaken in this, as you'll find hereafter.

Neither would I here be underſtood to comprehend Hiſtories which are obſerved to contain many Falſities; ſuch is that of *Herodotus* (which, by the Way, is not ſo Guilty in this Reſpect as ſome imagine): The Navigation of *Hanno*, the Life of *Apollonius* wrote by *Philoſtratus*, and many others.

Theſe Works are true in the Main, and falſe in ſome Parts. *Romances*, on the contrary, are falſe in the Groſs, and true in ſome Particulars. Theſe contain

Truth mingled with Falſhood
thoſe Falſhood irradiated b
ſome Inſperſion of Truth ;
mean, that Falſhood is ſo Pred
minant in *Romance*, that it ma
be altogether Falſe in Whol
and every Particular.

Ariſtotle informs us, That tha
Tragedy whoſe Argument
known, and extracted from H
ſtory, is the moſt Perfect, b
cauſe it ariſes nearer to Veri
mility than that whoſe Subject
New and Fictitious. Howeve
this he does not condemn, b
cauſe tho' the Plot of the Fo
mer be taken from Hiſtory, y
the Generality of the Spectato
may be Ignorant of it, and there
fore this Sort can't fail to giv
Diverſion to the Company. Th
ſam

ſame may be apply'd to *Romances*, with this Reſtraint, that a total Fiction of the Argument is more allowable in *Romances*, where the Actors are of indifferent Quality, (ſuch are the Comic) than in Heroic Performances, where Princes and Conquerors are the Characters, and where the Adventures are Memorable and Illuſtrious; becauſe it can't be probable that great Tranſactions and Events lie hid to the World, and neglected by Hiſtorians; and Probability, which is not always obſerv'd in Hiſtory, is eſſential to a *Romance*.

I exclude that ſort of Hiſtory which is Falſe throughout the whole Narration, but was invented

vented through the Deficiency of true Accounts and Information; ſuch are the imaginary Originals of moſt Nations, eſpecially thoſe which are Barbarous. Of this kind are the Hiſtories ſo palpably forged by the Monk *Annius Viterbenſis*, which deſerve the Indignation and Contempt of the Learned World.

There's the ſame difference between *Romances*, and theſe ſort of Works, as between thoſe, who by innocent Artifice Diſguize themſelves in Maſquerade for their own Pleaſure, and the Diverſion of others, and thoſe who aſſume the Name and Perſon of the Dead, or abſent, or poſſeſs themſelves of their Eſtates,

Eſtates, by the Colour of a Reſemblance to them.

Laſtly, I ſhall exclude Fables from my Subject, for *Romance* is a Fiction of Things which may, but never have happen'd; whereas the Matter of Fables is what never has, nor ever will be perform'd.

Now I have determin'd the Works which properly deſerve the Name of *Romance*, I aſſert, That their Original is deriv'd from the *Eaſtern* Nations, I mean the *Ægyptians*, *Arabians*, *Perſians*, and *Syrians*. I don't doubt your Concurrence with my Opinion, when I ſhall have ſhown, that the moſt Ancient Authors of this Work were deſcended from theſe Countries. *Clearchus* who

who compoſed Books of Love, was of *Cilicia*, a Province near *Syria*. *Jamblichus*, who wrote the Adventure of *Rhodanes* and *Sinonis*, was Born of *Syrian* Parents, and educated at *Babylon*. *Heliodorus*, Author of the Story of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*, was of *Emeſa*, a Town of *Phœnicia*. *Lucian*, who wrote the Metamorphoſis of *Lucius* into an Aſs, was of *Samoſata*, the Metropolis of *Commagena*, a Port of *Syria*. *Achilles Tatius*, who wrote the Amour of *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, was of *Alexandria* in *Ægypt*. The fabulous Hiſtory of *Barlaam* and *Joſaphat*, was compos'd by St. *John* of *Damaſcus*, the Chief City of *Syria*. *Damaſcius*, who compos'd four Books

of

of Fictions, not only incredible, as he Entitles them, but far diſtant from the reach of Probability, was, as *Photius* aſſures us, of the ſame *Damaſcus*. The three *Xenophons*, Romancers, which *Suidas* ſpeaks of; one was of *Antioch* in *Syria*, another of *Cyprus*, an Iſland near that Nation. So that this deſerves to be ſtil'd the Countrey of the *Romancers* rather than *Greece*, whither they were only tranſplanted; tho' they lik'd the Soil ſo well, and found it ſo agreeable, that they immediately took Root.

'Tis hardly credible how the Genius of theſe People is diſpoſed and addicted to Poetry, Invention, and Fiction. All their

Diſcourſe

Diſcourſe is Figures. They never expreſs themſelves but in Allegories. Their Theology and Philoſophy, but principally their Politicks and Morals, are all diſguiſed under Fables and Parables.

We may ſee by the Hieroglyphicks of the *Ægyptians*, to what a degree that Nation inclined to be Myſterious; every Thing with them was expreſs'd by Images; all in Diſguiſe. Their Religion was veil'd, and never diſclos'd to the Vulgar, but under the Mask of Fables; which they never took off, but for the Information of ſuch as were thought worthy to be initiated into their *Arcana*. *Herodotus* ſays, That the *Greeks* had from them

them their Mythology, and Theology; and he relates ſome Stories which himſelf had learned from the *Ægyptians*, and for which he is thought too Credulous, tho' he delivers them only as Fables. However, it tickled the Genius, and ſuited the Fancies of the *Greeks*, a Nation, as *Herodotus* affirms, deſirous to learn, and entirely addicted to Novelties.

'Twas without doubt from theſe Prieſts, that *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, in their Voyage to *Ægypt*, learned to Transform their Philoſophy, and hide it under the Shadow of Myſtery and Diſguiſe.

As for the *Arabians*, if you enquire into their Books, you'll find

find nothing but Unnatural Metaphors, Similitudes, and Fictions. Their *Alcoran* is of this kind; and *Mahomet* declares that he made it ſo, that it might be underſtood with leſs Difficulty, and leave a more laſting Impreſſion. They have tranſlated the Fables of *Æſop* into their own Language, and ſome of that Country have compoſed others in Imitation of them. *Locman*, ſo Famous in the *Eaſtern* Works, is no other than *Æſop*. His Fables, which the *Arabians* amaſſed into a prodigious Volume, raiſed him ſuch a Reputation among them, that the *Alcoran* beſtows a particular Chapter to Illuſtrate his Wiſdom, which bears his Name for its Title.

The

The Lives of their Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apoſtles, are all Fabulous. Nothing affects them ſo nearly as Poetry, which is the Study of their Eminent Genius's. This their Inclination is not Modern; it prevailed before the Time of *Mahomet*, as appears from our having ſome Performances of that kind, which bear as Ancient a Date. *Erpenius* affirms, that all the other Parts of the World together had not produc'd ſuch a Number of Poets as *Arabia*. They reckon Sixty as Princes of their Profeſſion; each of which is attended by Troops of a lower Eſteem. The moſt Illuſtrious wrote upon Love; and ſome of their Books upon that Subject

have

have been diſperſed in the *Weſt*; many of their *Caliphs* have thought this Art not unworthy their Application. *Abdalla*, one of them, diſtinguiſh'd himſelf in this Reſpect, and compos'd a Book of Similitudes, as *Elmacin* informs us.

'Tis from the *Arabians* (in my Judgment) that we receive the Art of Rhyming; and 'tis highly probable that the *Leonine* Verſes were made in Imitation of them: For it does not appear, that this Way of Writing was introduced into *Europe* before the Irruption of *Taric* and *Muza* into *Spain*; whereas we find it very prevalent in the following Ages; tho' otherwiſe I could produce that Rhymes

were

were not unknown to the Ancient *Romans*.

The *Persians* have not at all come short of the *Arabians*, in the Art of Falsifying agreeably. For altho' they detested nothing more, and forbad their Children nothing with greater Severity, than Lying, yet in their Books, and Commerce of Letters, they were extremely delighted with them, if Fictions may properly be said to be Lies. We need no farther Conviction in this Point than the Fabulous Adventures of their Lawgiver *Zoroaster*. *Strabo* informs us, that their Teachers deliver'd Moral Precepts to their Disciples, under the Umbrage of Fiction; and in another Place he tells us, there's no Credit

dit to be given to the Ancient Hiſtories of the *Perſians*, *Medes*, and *Syrians*, becauſe of the ſtrong Inclination their Writers had to relate Falſities for Truth; ſince the Compoſers of Fables were in the Higheſt Eſteem, and were ſure the People would take Pleaſure to read thoſe Fabulous Recitals compos'd after the Manner of Hiſtories. The Fables of *Æſop* are ſo much in Favour with them, that they will have the Author to be their Countryman (the ſame with *Locman*, mention'd in the *Alcoran*, as I have obſerv'd) who is in ſo high Reputation among all the People in the *Levant*, that they deſpoil *Phrygia* of the Honour of his Birth, and vindicate it to themſelves.

For

For the *Arabians* ſay he was of the Race of the *Hebrews*; and the *Perſians* aſſert, that he was an *Arabian* Negro, and lived in the Town *Caſuvin*, which is the *Arſacia* of the Antients. Others on the contrary (obſerving his Life written by *Mirkond*, to be very agreeable to that of *Æſop*, which *Maximus Planudes* has left; and taking Notice, that as the Angels give Wiſdom to *Locman* in *Mirkond*, ſo *Mercury* beſtows the ſame upon *Æſop*, according to *Philoſtratus*) are perſwaded that the *Greeks* have ſtolen *Locman* from the Orientals, and of him compoſed their *Æſop*. But I muſt not here determine this Controverſy. I ſhall only recommend what is ſaid by

Strabo

Strabo to your Notice, That the Hiſtories of the People in the *Eaſt* are ſtufft with Lies, and are not at all Faithful or Exact; that it is very probable they have been Fictitious in their Account of the Author, and Original of Fables, as well as in the reſt; that the *Greeks* are more Diligent, and of better Credit, both in their Chronology and Hiſtory; and that the Conformity of *Mirkond's Locman* with the *Æſop* of *Planudes* and *Philoſtratus*, does no more prove that *Æſop* was *Locman*, than that *Locman* was *Æſop*. The *Perſians* have Sirnamed *Locman* the *Sage*, for that *Æſop* was in Effect reckon'd in the Number of the *Wiſe*. They ſay he was very well ver-

ſed

ſed in the Science of Medicine, that he found out admirable Secrets, and among the reſt that of reviving the Dead.

They have been ſo laborious in their Paraphraſes and Comments upon his Fables, that they (as well as the *Arabians*) have augmented them into a great Volume, a Copy of which is to be ſeen in the *Vatican*. His Reputation has ſpead as far as *Ægypt* and *Nubia*, where his Character and Wiſdom are in great Veneration. The Modern *Turks* have no leſs Eſteem for him, and believe, with *Mirkond*, that he liv'd in *David*'s Time; in which Account (if he be really *Æſop*, and we may confide in the *Greek* Chronology) they are

not miſtaken above Four Hundred and Fifty Years, which is very excuſable in the *Turks*, who rarely come ſo near in their Computation. This Opinion would agree better with *Heſiod*, who was Cotemporary with *Solomon*; and who (in the Opinion of *Quintilian*) deſerves the Honour of the Invention of Fables, which is attributed to *Æſop*.

There are no Poets that equal the *Perſians* in Licenſe; they give themſelves to Falſify: The Lives of their Saints, the Original of their Religion, they have ſo diſfigur'd in their Hiſtories (the Truth of which we know from the Relations of the *Greeks* and *Romans*) that we can't be

be ſure of any Thing they deliver. They have degenerated ſo far from their once laudable Deteſtation of thoſe who advanced their own Intereſt by Falſhood, that they now account it an Honour to do ſo. They are paſſionately fond of Poetry; 'tis the Diverſion of the Princes and People. The chief Entertainment of a Feaſt is wanting by the abſence of a Poet. The Works of Gallantry and Love-Stories have been Famous, and diſcover the Romancing Genius of the Nation.

The *Indians* alſo, Neighbours of the *Perſians*, had a ſtrong Inclination to Fabulous Inventions. *Sandabar* of that Country compoſed a Book of *Parables*,

which was Tranſlated by the *Hebrews*, and is at this Day to be found in the Libraries of the Curious. Father *Pouſſin*, the Jeſuit, has joyned to his *Pachymeron*, which he lately Printed at *Rome*, a Dialogue between *Abſolom*, King of the *Indies*, and a *Gymnoſophiſt*, upon ſeveral Queſtions of *Morality*; where this Philoſopher never expreſſes himſelf but in Fables, after the Manner of *Æſop*. The Preface to this Book imports, that it was carefully kept in the Treaſury of the Charters of the Realm; that *Perzoez* Phyſician of *Choſroez*, King of *Perſia*, Tranſlated it out of *Indian* and *Perſian*, ſome other out of *Perſian* into *Arabian*; and *Simeon Sethi*

Sethi from *Arabian* into *Greek*. This Book is ſo little different from the *Apologues*, which bear the Name of the *Indian Pilpay*, and which were ſeen in *French* ſome few Years ſince, that there's no doubt but that it was either the Original, or the Copy. For 'tis ſaid that this *Pilpay* was a *Brachman*, who had a Great Poſt in the Affairs of State and Government of the *Indies* under King *Dabchelin*; that he comprized all his Politics and Morals within this Book, which was preſerved by the Kings of the *Indies*, as a Treaſure of Wiſdom and Learning. That the Reputation of this Book being carried ſo far as to *Nouſhirevon*, King of *Perſia*, he procured a

Copy of it by the Intereſt of his Phyſician, who tranſlated it into *Perſian*; that Caliph *Abuiafar Almanzor* cauſed it to be tranſlated from *Perſian* into *Arabian*; and another out of *Arabian* into *Perſian*; and that after all theſe *Perſian* Tranſlations, a New one was compoſed different from all the former; and from this came the *French* Tranſlation. 'Tis certain, that whoever reads the Hiſtory of the pretended Patriarchs of the *Indians*, *Brammond* and *Bremaw*, of their Poſterity and Propagation, will need no farther Proof to convince him of the Love this People have for Fables. This inclines me to believe that *Horace*, when he gave the Epi-

thet

thet of Fabulous to the River *Hydaſpes*, which ariſes in this Country, meaned that it begins and ends its Courſe among a People very much addicted to Fiction and Diſguiſe.

Theſe Fictions and Parables which you ſee make up the prophane Learning of the Nations before-mention'd, have been ſanctify'd in *Syria*; and the Sacred Authors complying with the Humour of the *Jews*, made Uſe of them to expreſs the Inſpirations they receiv'd from Heaven. The Holy Scripture is altogether Myſterious, Allegorical, and Ænigmatical. The *Talmudiſts* are of Opinion that the Book of *Job* is no other than a Parable of the *Hebrews*

Invention ; this Book, that of *David*, the *Proverbs*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, the *Canticles*, and all other Holy Songs, are Poetical Works abounding with Figures, which would ſeem bold and violent in our Writings, and which are frequent in thoſe of that Nation. The Book of *Proverbs* is otherwiſe call'd the *Paraboles*, becauſe Proverbs of this ſort, according to the Definition of *Quintilian*, are only ſhort Figures or Parables expreſs'd in little.

The Book of *Canticles* is a kind of *Dramatic* Poem, where the paſſionate Sentiments of the Bridegroom and Spouſe are expreſſed after a Manner ſo tender and touching, that we

ſhould

ſhould be charmed and affected with it, if the Expreſſion and Figures had a little more Conformity to our Genius; or if we could Diveſt our ſelves of Prejudice, which diſpoſes us to diſlike every Thing which is the leaſt different from what we are uſed to; tho' by this Practice we condemn our ſelves without perceiving it, ſince our Lightneſs never permits us to continue long in the Approbation of any Thing.

Our Saviour himſelf ſcarce ever gave any Precepts to the *Jews* but under the Veil of Parables. The *Talmud* contains a Million of Fables, every one more Impertinent than the other; many of the Rabbins

have ſince explained, illuſtrated, and digeſted them in their particular Works; and beſide this have compoſed ſeveral Poems, Prologues and Apologues.

The *Cyprians* and *Cilicians* have invented certain Fables which bore the Name of the People of thoſe Nations; and the particular Diſpoſition of the *Cilicians* to Lying gave riſe to one of the Ancienteſt Proverbs in *Greece*.

In ſhort, Fables have been in ſuch Vogue all over theſe Countries, that (according to the Teſtimony of *Lucian*,) there were particular Orders of Men among the *Aſſyrians* and *Arabians*, whoſe ſole Province was to explain Fables; and who obſerved ſuch a Regularity

Regularity in their Life, that they extended it much farther than other People.

But it is not enough to have diſcovered *The Original of Romances*; we muſt ſee by what Streams they have ſpread and convey'd themſelves into *Greece*, and *Italy*, and whether they have paſſed from thence to us; or we have received them from any other Nation. The *Ionians*, a People of *Aſia Minor*, being raiſed to great Power, and having acquired vaſt Riches, immerſed themſelves into Luxury and Voluptuouſneſs, and indulged themſelves in all the Extravagancies of Plenty.

Cyrus

Cyrus ſubdued them by making *Cræſus* his Captive, with whom he received all *Aſia Minor* into his Subjection. The *Perſians* upon this Succeſs admitted their Manners with their Laws, and mixed their Debauches with thoſe their own Inclinations ſupplied them with, and ſo grew to be the moſt Voluptuous Nation in the World. They began to refine upon the Pleaſures of the Table, by making the Addition of Flowers and Perfumes. They firſt invented the Ornaments for their Houſes. The fineſt Wools, and the richeſt Tapeſtries in the World were their Productions. They invented the laſcivious Dance, call'd the *Ionic*; and became ſo remarkable for Effeminacy.

nacy, that it grew into a Proverb. But the *Mileſians*, above all the reſt, diſcover'd the indulging Temper, ſurpaſſed them all in the Accuracy of their Pleaſures, and ſhew'd the moſt ſingular Taſte for Delicacies. They were the firſt who introduced the Art of Romancing among the *Perſians*, when they had had ſuch Succeſs in it themſelves, that the *Mileſian* Fables, the ſame with Romances, full of Love Adventures, and Licentious Relations, advanced into the Higheſt Reputation: 'Tis probable Romances were Innocent 'till they fell into their Hands, and before recounted only ſingular and memorable Adventures.

But

But theſe were the firſt who corrupted them, and filled them with Laſcivious and Amorous Narrations. Their Works are devoured by Time: We hear of no more than *Ariſtides* of them, who was the moſt Famous of the Romancers, and wrote ſeveral Books of Verſe, called the *Mileſian* Fables. I find that one *Dionyſius*, a *Mileſian*, who lived under the Reign of *Darius* the Firſt, compoſed ſome Fabulous Hiſtories; but ſince I can't be certain whether this was any more than a compiling of Ancient Fables, and can't ſee ſufficient Reaſon to believe, that they could properly be called *Mileſian* Fables; I can't number

number him among the Writers of Romance.

The *Ionians*, deſcended from *Attica* and *Peloponneſus*, out of the Deference they had for their Original, maintain'd a great Correſpondence with the *Greeks*. The Children of theſe Nations were ſent from the one to the other for Education, that they might be the better acquainted with the Manners and Habit of Life of each other. By this Commerce *Greece*, which had of it ſelf Inclination enough to Fables, learned the Art of Romances from the *Ionians*, and improved it with great Succeſs. But to avoid Confuſion, I ſhall endeavour to give an Account of thoſe Writers amongſt the

Greeks,

Greeks, who have been moſt Famous in this Art according to the Times they lived in.

I find none before *Alexander* the Great, which perſwades me, that the Romancing Science made no conſiderable Progreſs among the *Greeks* before their Conqueſt over the *Perſians*, from whom they received it. *Clearchus* of *Soli*, a Town of *Cilicia*, who lived in *Alexander*'s Time, and was with him a Diſciple to *Ariſtotle*, is the firſt whom I obſerve to have wrote Books of Love, tho' I am not well aſſured whether theſe were not a Collection extracted from Hiſtory or Vulgar Fable, like that which *Parthenius* compoſed under *Auguſtus*, which is yet Extant.

tant. That which confirms my Suſpicion, is a little Story cited from him by *Athenæus*, which gives an Account of ſome Marks of Love and Eſteem which *Gyges*, King of *Lydia*, expreſſed to one of his *Courteſans*.

Antonius Diogenes, (according to the Opinion of *Photius*) lived not long after *Alexander*; and compoſed a true Romance of the Amours of *Dinias* and *Dercyllis*, in Imitation of the *Odyſſeis* of *Homer*, and the Adventurous Voyages of *Ulyſſes*. This Romance, though very Imperfect in ſeveral Particulars, and ſtuffed with fooliſh and extravagant Relations, ſcarce excuſable in a Poet, may nevertheleſs be called Regular. *Photius* has an

Abſtract

Abſtract of it in his *Bibliotheca*, and aſſerts it to be the Original of that which *Lucian*, *Lucius*, *Jamblichus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Heliodorus*, and *Damaſcius*, have written in this Nature. However, he adds in the ſame Place, that *Antonius Diogenes* makes mention of one *Antiphanes* more Ancient than himſelf, who wrote a Book of wonderful Hiſtories like his; ſo that we have the ſame Reaſon to believe, That he erected the Idea and Inſtitution of Romances, as that *Antonius Diogenes* did. I ſuppoſe he muſt be underſtood to ſpeak of *Antiphanes* the Comic Poet, whom *Stephanus* the *Geographer*, and others, affirm to have compoſed a Collection of

imper-

impertinent and incredible Relations. He was of *Berge*, a Town of *Thrace*; but we can have no Information of what Country *Antonius Diogenes* was.

I can't tell preciſely in what Time *Ariſtides* of *Miletus* lived; but this we may be confident of, That it was before the Civil Wars of *Marius* and *Sylla*; becauſe *Siſenna*, a *Roman* Hiſtorian of that Time, tranſlated his *Mileſian* Fables. This Work was full of Obſcenities, and upon that Account gave great Diverſion to the *Romans*; ſo that the *Surenas*, or Lieutenant-General of the *Parthian* Government, who defeated the *Roman* Army under *Craſſus*, when he found them among the Baggage of

of *Roſcius*, took Occaſion before the Senate of *Seleucia* to inſult and defame the tender and effeminate Diſpoſition of the *Romans*, who in the time of War could not diſengage themſelves of ſo ſoft Entertainments.

Lucius of *Patras*, *Lucian* of *Samoſata*, and *Jamblichus*, lived very near the ſame Time, under the Emperors *Antoninus*, and *Marcus Aurelius*. The firſt of them muſt not be reckoned among Romancers, for he no more than collected ſome Metamorphoſes of the Magical Transformation of Men into Beaſts, and Beaſts into Men; dealing very ſimply and fairly, ſince he believed all that he wrote. *Lucian* with

with much more Policy and Judgment, relates ſome part of his Works only to expoſe and ridicule them, in the Book which he called *Lucius*'s *Aſs*; to intimate that the Fiction was originally his. 'Tis in Effect an Abridgment of the two firſt Books of *Lucius*'s *Metamorphoſis*; and this Fragment lets us ſee, That *Photius* had great Reaſon to arraign and decry his obſcene and ſmutty Expreſſions. This ingenious and celebrated *Aſs*, whoſe Hiſtory theſe Authors wrote, was extremely like another of the ſame Worth and Merit, which *Photius* ſpeaks of from *Damaſcius* in this Manner: "This *Aſs*, ſays he, was the "Beaſt of a Grammarian na-

"med

" med *Ammonius*; of ſo gentle " and tender a Diſpoſition, ſo " an admirable and polite a " Taſte, that it would gladly " forſake its Food, to hear Ver- " ſes repeated, and be very ſen- " ſibly touched with the Beau- " ties and Strokes of Poetry ". The *Brancaleon* is without doubt an Imitation of this *Aſs* of *Lucius*, or that of *Apuleius*. This is an *Italian* Fiction, very full of Elegance and Diverſion. *Lucian*, beſides his *Lucius*, compoſed two Books of wild and extravagant Hiſtories; which he declared to be ſuch, and proteſted that the Subjects of them were ſuch as never had been, nor would be performed. Some obſerving that theſe Books were

added

added to that which delivers Rules for Compoſing a good Hiſtory; infer that he intended it as an Example of what he had enjoyned, tho' he himſelf declares in the Entrance of the Work, That he had no farther Deſign in it, than to expoſe thoſe Poets, Hiſtorians, and Philoſophers themſelves, who exhibited Fiction for Truth with Impunity; and wrote ſuch Relations of Foreign Countries, as *Cleſias* and *Jambulus* had done. Now if this be true which *Photius* aſſures us, That the Romance of *Antonius Diogenes* gave riſe to theſe two of *Lucian*: We muſt underſtand that *Lucian* took Occaſion from this, and the fabulous Hiſtories of *Cleſias* and

Jambulus,

Jambulus, to compoſe his own, on purpoſe to detect and condemn the Vanity and Impertinence of theirs.

About this Time *Jamblichus* publiſh'd his *Babylonics*, (for that was the Name of it) in which he vaſtly outdid all who preceded him. For if we may judge of it by the Fragment which *Photius* has left us of it, his Deſign comprehends but one Action, adorned with all neceſſary Improvements; and attended with Epiſodes, ariſing from the principal Subject. He has obſerved Veriſimility moſt exactly; his Adventures are mixed with Variety without Confuſion: We can find Fault with nothing but want of Art in the Contri-

vance

vance of his Plot; that he has not been ſtrict in following the Order of Time; and that he did not admit the Reader into the Middle of his Deſign at his firſt ſetting out, after the Example of *Homer* in his *Odyſſeis*. Time has been Favourable to this Piece, for it has been ſeen in the Library of the *Eſcurial*.

Heliodorus excell'd him in the Diſpoſition of his Subject, and indeed in every other Particular. Hitherto the World had not ſeen any thing better deſigned, and more compleat in Romance, than the Adventures of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*: Nothing can be more chaſte than their Loves: By this it appears, (beſide the Honour of the Chriſtian Religi-

gion, which he profeſſed) that he had in his own Nature ſuch an Air of Virtue, as ſhines throughout the Work; in which not only *Jamblichus*, but almoſt all the reſt, are much his Inferiors. His Merit advanc'd him to the Dignity of an Epiſcopal See: He was Biſhop of *Tricca*, a City of *Theſſaly*. *Socrates* reports, that he introduced into that Dioceſe, the Cuſtom of Depoſing ſuch of the Clergy, as did not abſtain from the Women they had contracted before their Admiſſion into Orders. This makes me very much ſuſpect what *Nicephorus*, a credulous Writer, of little Judgment or Sincerity, relates; That a Provincial Synod, underſtanding

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the Danger which the Reading this Romance (ſo highly Authoriſed by the Dignity of its Author) might expoſe Young People to; propoſed, that he ſhould either conſent to the Burning of his Book, or the Reſignation of his Biſhoprick; and that he accepted the latter of the Conditions. For the reſt, I can't but admire, that a Learned Man of this Age ſhould ſuſpect, whether this was the Book of *Heliodorus*, Biſhop of *Tricca*, or no; after *Socrates*, *Photius*, and *Nicephorus*, had given ſuch evident Teſtimonies of it. Some have been of Opinion, that he lived about the End of the Twelfth Age; confounding him with *Heliodorus* the *Arabian*, whoſe

Life *Philoſtratus* has writ, among thoſe of the other Sophiſts. But it is known, that he was Cotemporary with *Arcadius* and *Honorius*; and we find in *Photius*'s Catalogue of the Romancers, who he thought wrote in Imitation of *Antonius Diogenes*, where he names them in a Chronological Order; he has placed *Heliodorus* after *Jamblichus*, and before *Damaſcius*; who lived in the Time of the Emperor *Juſtinian*.

According to this Account, *Achilles Tatius*, who wrote a Regular Romance of the Amours of *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, ought to have preceded; tho' I can find no certain Account, to juſtify my Opinion. Others think him

him more recent in his Style: However, he is not to be compared to *Heliodorus*, either for the Regularity of his Manners, the Variety of Events, or the Artifice of Unravelling his Plots. Indeed his Style is to be preferr'd to that of *Heliodorus*, becauſe 'tis more Simple and Natural; whereas the other's is more forced. Some ſay, that he was a Chriſtian, and a Biſhop too. 'Tis ſtrange, that the Obſcenity of his Book ſhould be ſo eaſily forgot; and more ſo, that the Emperor *Leo*, ſirnamed the *Philoſopher*, ſhould commend the Modeſty of it, in an Epigram which is yet extant; and not only permit, but recommend the Reading of it with the clo-

ſeſt Application, to all thoſe who profeſs the Love of Chaſtity.

I am afraid I ſhall be impleaded of Raſhneſs, if I aſſign the next Place to *Athenagoras*, under whoſe Name there goes a Romance, the Title of which is, *Of True and Perfect Love*. This Book has not appeared in any Language but *French*, of *Fumee*'s Tranſlation; who tells us in his Preface, that he had the *Greek* Original from Mr. *de Lamane*, Prothonotary of the Cardinal *d' Armagnac*; and that he never ſaw it elſewhere. I almoſt dare add, 'twas never ſeen ſince; for the Name of it was never mention'd, that I know of, in the Catalogues of

any Libraries; and if it is at all in Being, 'tis buried among Duſt in the Cloſet of ſome Illiterate Perſon, who poſſeſſes the Treaſure, and knows not of it; or elſe 'tis in the Hands of the Invidious, who won't oblige the Publick with it; tho' 'twould not be in the leaſt to their Diſadvantage. The Tranſlator adds further, that he believes it to be the Production of that Famous *Athenagoras*, who writ the Apology for the Chriſtian Religion, in the Manner of a Legation, (and addreſs'd it to the Emperors *Marcus Aurelius*, and *Commodus*) and another Treatiſe of the Reſurrection. The chief Reaſon for his Opinion, is the Conformity of his Style; which

he had a good Opportunity to judge of, becauſe he had the Originals before him. He takes it for a True Story, not underſtanding the Art of Romances. For my part, tho' I can't pronounce of it with Certainty, becauſe I have not ſeen the Original in *Greek*; yet the Reading the Tranſlation, inclines me to think, that he had ſeveral ſufficient Grounds, to aſſign the Author of it to be *Athenagoras* the Apologiſt. For the Apologiſt was a Chriſtian; and this ſpeaks of Divinity, after a manner very inconſiſtent with any, but one of that Profeſſion: As when he makes the Prieſts of *Ammon* declare, "That there is but One "God; and that every Nation

" desirous to represent his Es-
" sence to the Simple, had in-
" vented several Images, which
" expressed but the same Thing.
" That their true Signification
" being defaced by Time, the
" Vulgar believed there were
" so many Gods, as they saw
" Images: That this was the O-
" riginal of Idolatry. That
" *Bacchus*, when he built the
" Temple of *Ammon*, placed in
" it no other Image than that of
" God; because as there is but
" One in Heaven, which con-
" tains but One World; in this
" World there is but One God,
" who is communicated in Spi-
" rit.

He makes this, and much more, said by some *Ægyptian*

Merchants. "That the Gods in "the Fable, denoted the diffe- "rent Operations of this Sove- "reign, and only One Divini- "ty, who is without Begin- "ning, and without End: Whom he calls Obſcure, and Dark, becauſe he is Inviſible, and Incomprehenſible. Farther; the Diſcourſes of the Prieſts and Merchants, upon the Divine Eſſence, very much reſemble thoſe of *Athenagoras*, in his Legation. The Apologiſt was a Prieſt of *Athens*; this was an *Athenian* Philoſopher: Both ſeem Men of Senſe, and Learning, and great Penetration into Antiquity.

But

But on the other ſide, we have many Reaſons to ſuſpect, not only that this is not *Athenagoras* the Chriſtian, but that the Book it ſelf is a mere Forgery.

Photius, giving an Exact Account of the Compoſers of Romances before his Time, takes no Notice of him at all. No body ever ſaw a Copy of this Work in any Library; and that which the Tranſlator made uſe of, never appear'd ſince. Beſides, he repreſents the Habitation, Life, and Conduct of the Prieſts and Religious of *Ammon*, ſo very like the Convents and Government of our Monks and Friars, that it ill accords with what Hiſtory informs us,

&c.

of the Time when the Monaſtic Life began, and when it arrived to Perfection.

Among all this Obſcurity, what ſeems moſt probable to me, is, that 'tis an Ancient Work, but of a later Date than the Apology.

For I obſerve ſuch a Profound Knowledge, both in Matters of Nature and Art; ſo great an Intimacy with the Annals of Time paſt, ſo many Curious Remarks, not taken from Ancient Authors which are left us, but which relate to, and explain them; ſo much of the *Greek* Phraſe, which one may diſcover throughout the Tranſlation; and over all, a certain Character of Antiquity, which cannot be coun-

counterfeited; that I can't be perſuaded that it is any Production of *Fumee*'s, whoſe Learning was but indifferent; or that the moſt Able and Ingenious Perſon in thoſe Days, could deviſe any Thing like it. If *Photius* hath not mentioned him; how many other Great and Famous Authors have eſcaped his Cogniſance, or his Diligence! If in our Days only one Copy was found, which perhaps is ſince loſt; how many other Excellent Works have undergone the ſame Deſtiny! If this fails of giving you Satisfaction, and you'll oblige me to extend my Conjectures, and attempt to find out the Preciſe Time of its Production; I have nothing left to

ſup-

ſupport my Opinion, but one Paſſage in the Preface to the Work; where he complains of the fatal Blow his Country *Athens* was about to receive, in the General Deſolation of *Greece*; which can't be underſtood, but of the Irruption of the *Scythians* into *Greece*, which happen'd under the Empire of *Gallienus*; or elſe that of *Alarie*, King of the *Goths*, which fell out in the Time of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. For *Athens* was not ſack'd ſince *Sylla*'s Time, till the Invaſion of the *Scythians*, which was about Three Hundred and fifty Years after, which preceded that of the *Goths* the ſame Term of Years. But I ſee more Reaſon to apply the Words of the Author to

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the Conqueſt of *Illyria*; becauſe the *Scythians* were ſoon repulſed from *Athens*, before they had done much Miſchief; but the *Goths* treated them with much more Rudeneſs, and left behind them ſad Inſtances of their Barbarous Cruelty. *Syneſius*, who lived at that Time, ſpeaks of them in the ſame Terms with our Author; and, with him, laments to ſee Learning, and the Liberal Sciences, ravaged by the *Barbarians*, in the very Place of their Birth, and Seat of their Empire. However, this Work, which bears the Name of *Athenagoras*, is invented with Wit, conducted with Art, Sententious, and full of Excellent Moral Precepts: The Events agree

with

with Verisimility; the Episodes are drawn from the Subject; the Characters clear and distinct: *Decorum* is exactly preserved throughout: Nothing low; nothing forced, or like the Pedantic Style of the Sophists.

The Argument is double; (which makes one of the great Beauties of our Modern Comedy) for besides the Adventure of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*, he delivers that of *Pherecydes* and *Malangenia*; which evinces the Mistake of *Giraldi*, who believed the Multiplying of Actions was the Invention of the *Italians*; whereas the *Greeks*, and our Old *French*, have practised it before them. The first, with Dependance and Subordination

to

to one Principal Action, follow the Rules of an Heroick Poem; as *Athenagoras* and *Heliodorus* have done, tho' not ſo accurately: But our Old *French* have multiplied them without Order, Connexion, or Art. Theſe the *Italians* have imitated, borrowing of them their Romances, with their Imperfections. Here we find *Giraldi* in a worſe Error than the former: He endeavours to commend this Vice, and turn it into a Virtue: Whereas, if it be true what himſelf aſſerts, that a Romance ſhould reſemble a Perfect Body, and conſiſt of many different Parts and Proportions all under one Head; it follows, that the Principal Action of a Romance ſhould be

Sim-

an Epic Poem, upon the Reading a Single Comparison, or Description. One Verse a little harsh, which the Subject or Place does sometimes require, destroys the Reputation of the Whole. One Happy Thought, or Tender Sentiment, makes the Fortune of a Romance: One Expression, or one Superannuated Word, defaces it. But the Authors of them won't stand to these Determinations; but (like the Comedian in *Horace*, who, when he was hiss'd off the Stage by the People, was satisfied with the Approbation of a few Understanding Persons) they are content if they please the Nicest and most Able Judges, who are directed in to pass Sentence by other

Kind

qual Beauty and Eminence, 'twas as impoſſible to digeſt them into one Regular Body, as 'twould be to erect a Compleat Structure with no Materials but Sand. The Applauſe which the Faulty Romances of his Nation have receiv'd, does yet juſtify him the leſs: We are not to judge of a Performance by the Number, but Sufficiency of the Approbators. Every one aſſumes to himſelf the Licenſe to judge of, and cenſure Poeſie and Romance: The Sumptuous Palaces and Common Streets are made Tribunals, where the Merits of the Greateſt Works receive a Supreme Deciſion. There every one ſhoots his Bolt, and boldly preſumes to ſet an Eſtimate of

an Epic Poem, upon the Reading a Single Compariſon, or Deſcription. One Verſe a little harſh, which the Subject or Place does ſometimes require, deſtroys the Reputation of the Whole. One Happy Thought, or Tender Sentiment, makes the Fortune of a Romance: One Expreſſion, or one Superannuated Word, defaces it. But the Authors of them won't ſtand to theſe Determinations; but (like the Comedian in *Horace*, who, when he was hiſſed off the Stage by the People, was ſatisfied with the Approbation of a few Underſtanding Perſons) they are content if they pleaſe the Niceſt and moſt Able Judges, who are directed to paſs Sentence by other

Kind

Kind of Rules; which are known to ſo few, that (as I have already obſerved) a Good Judge is as rarely to be found as a Good Romancer, or a Good Poet: And that in the ſmall Number of thoſe who underſtand, and can judge of Proſe, we can hardly find one, who underſtands Poetry, and who is convinc'd of the vaſt Difference between that Art and Proſe. Theſe Critics, whoſe Sentence is the certain Rule to value Poems or Romances by, did concede to *Giraldi*, that the *Italian* Romances have many Good Things in them, and deſerve many other Commendations, but not thoſe of Regularity, Contrivance, or Juſtneſs of Deſign.

I re-

I return to the Romance of *Athenagoras*; where the Diſcovery of the Plot, tho' without Machine, is leſs happy than the reſt; it goes not off ſmartly enough; it preſents it ſelf, before the Paſſion and Impatience of the Reader are ſufficiently warmed, and is made with too much Repetition. But his greateſt Fault is his Extravagant Oſtentation, with which he diſplays his Skill in Architecture. What he writes, might be Admirable elſewhere, but is Vicious and Impertinent where he diſpoſes it. "For a Poet, ſaith "*Giraldi*, ought not, in deſcri-"bing a Fabric, to ſhew him-"ſelf an Architect; for in ta-"king Notice of Particulars

"be-

longing to that Art, he
ves what is properly a Po-
's Buſineſs, which he ought
incipally to regard, if he
pects Commendation; Be-
des, ſuch Mechanic Deſcrip-
ons debaſe the Work, are
o mean, and far below the
randeur and Magnificence of
Heroic Poem.

He has taken many Things
Heliodorus, or *Heliodorus*
him; for as I believe them
emporaries, I can't determine
which of them the Glory of
Invention ought to be aſcri-
The Names and Chara-
s of *Theogenes* and *Chariclea*,
mble thoſe of *Theagenes* and
riclea. *Theogenes* and *Chari-*
ſee, and fall in Love with
each

each other, at a Feaſt of *Minerva*; as *Theagenes* and *Chariclea* do at the Feaſt of *Apollo*. *Athenagoras* makes one *Haronda-tes* Governor of the Lower *Ægypt*: *Heliodorus* makes *Oroondates* Governor of *Ægypt*. *Athenagoras* feigns *Theogenes* ready to be ſacrificed by the *Scythians*: *Heliodorus* makes *Theagenes* about to be a Victim to the *Æthiopians*: And *Athenagoras*, like *Heliodorus*, has diſpoſed his Work into Ten Books.

I ſhall not place the Books of *Paradoxes* of *Damaſcius*, an Heathen Philoſopher, who lived under *Juſtinian*, among the Number of Romances. For tho' *Photius* obſerves, that he imitated *Antonius Diogenes*, the Model of

Greek

eek Romancers; 'tis to be un-
rſtood, that like him he com-
ſed Hiſtories, Fabulous and
credible, but not Romantic,
r after the manner of Ro-
nces: For he related only
e Apparitions of Spectres, and
blins, and Events above Na-
re, either too lightly to be
edited, or invented with little
ldreſs, becoming the Atheiſm
d Impiety of the Author.

Two Years after *Damaſcius*,
s the Hiſtory of *Barlaam* and
ſaphat, compoſed by St. *John*
maſcenus. Many Ancient Ma-
ſcripts aſcribe it to *John* the
naite, who lived in the Time
Theodoſius; but without Rea-
n, as *Billius* makes it appear;
cauſe the Diſputes againſt the

Iconoclaſts, which are inſerted i
this Work, were not moved a
that Time, nor long after, by
Leo Iſauricus the Emperor, un
der whom St. *John Damaſcenu*
lived. 'Tis a Romance, but
Spiritual one: It treats of Love
but 'tis the Love of God: W
there find much Bloodſhed; bu
'tis the Blood of Martyrs: It i
written in the Form of an Hi
ſtory, not according to th
Rules of a Romance; tho' Veri
ſimility is exactly enough obſer
ved. It bears with it ſo man
Marks of Fiction, that it is no
to be read, but with ſome littl
Judgment to diſcover it. I
the other Particulars of it, on
may detect the Fabulous *Genius*
of the Author's Nation, by th
great

great Number of Parables, Comparisons, and Similitudes, which are very liberally dispersed in it.

The Romance of *Theodorus Prodromus*, and that which some attribute to *Eustathius* Bishop of *Thessalonica*, who flourished in the Empire of *Manuel Comnenus*, about the Middle of the Twelfth Age, are much of the same Nature. The first contains the Amours of *Dosicles* and *Rhodanthe*; the *other*, those of *Asmenas* and *Ismene*. Monsieur *Gaulmin* has made both of them Public, with his Translation, and Notes. He says nothing of *Eustathius*, in the Preface to the Book which bears that Name: I'll interpret his Silence in his Favour; and

believe, that that Ingenious Man could not fall into the Error of thoſe, who perſuade themſelves, that the Learned and Famous Commentator upon *Homer*, was capable of writing ſuch a Miſerable Work as this. Beſides, ſome Manuſcripts read the Author *Eumathius*, and not *Euſtathius*. However that be, nothing is more frigid, empty, and impertinent: No *Decorum*, no Veriſimility, no Conduct is preſerved. 'Tis the Work of ſome School-boy, or wretched Pedagogue, who deſerved to be a School-boy all the Days of his Life.

Theodorus Prodromus is little better; however, he has ſomething more of Art, tho' it be

ſcarce-

ſcarcely perceivable. He never extricates himſelf, but by Machinery. He underſtands not how to make his Actors preſerve the Juſtneſs and Uniformity of their Characters. His Work is rather a Poem, than a Romance, for it is writ in Verſe; and this makes his Style (which is too Licentious, and full of Figures) the more pardonable: But ſince his Verſe is *Iambic*, which is extremely like Proſe, I can't exclude him from it. Some ſay he was a *Ruſſian* by Birth, a Prieſt, a Poet, a Philoſopher, and a Phyſician.

My Judgment upon the Paſtorals of *Longus* the Sophiſt, is the ſame with that I gave of the Two former Romances. For

I return to the Romance of *Athenagoras*; where the Diſcovery of the Plot, tho' without Machine, is leſs happy than the reſt; it goes not off ſmartly enough; it preſents it ſelf, before the Paſſion and Impatience of the Reader are ſufficiently warmed, and is made with too much Repetition. But his greateſt Fault is his Extravagant Oſtentation, with which he diſplays his Skill in Architecture. What he writes, might be Admirable elſewhere, but is Vicious and Impertinent where he diſpoſes it. "For a Poet, ſaith "*Giraldi*, ought not, in deſcribing a Fabric, to ſhew himſelf an Architect; for in taking Notice of Particulars

"be-

dations it receives. 'Tis the Style of a Sophiſt, ſuch as he was; like that of *Euſtathius*, and *Theodorus Prodromus*, which partakes of the Orator and Hiſtorian, tho' it be proper for neither of them. 'Tis full of *Metaphors*, *Antitheſes*, Figures, which dazzle and ſurprize the Simple, and tickle the Ear, without ſatisfying the Mind; inſtead of Engaging the Reader, by the Novelty of Events, the Arrangement and Variety of Matter, a clear and cloſe Narration, attended by a ſmooth and regular Cadence, which always advances within the Subject.

He endeavours (as all Sophiſts do) to entertain his Reader with Accidental Deſcripti-

ons : He leads him out of the way ; and while he admits him ſo far into a Country he did not look for, he ſpends and exhauſts the Attention and Impatience he had to arrive at the End he propoſed. I tranſlated this Romance, when I was a Child ; which is the only Age it will pleaſe. I ſhall not tell you in what Time he liv'd : None of the Ancients have made Mention of him ; and he bears no Indication to encourage any Opinion, unleſs it be the Purity of his Style ; which makes me believe him more Ancient than the Two former.

For the Three *Xenophons*, who were Romancers, which *Suidas* ſpeaks of ; I can ſay no more than

than he has done: That one of them was of *Antioch*; another of *Ephesus*; the Third of *Cyprus*: All of them wrote Love-Stories. The first gave his Book the Name of *Babylonics*; the Second entitled his the *Ephesiaes*, and relates the Amours of *Habrecomas* and *Anthea*; the Third named his the *Cypriacs*; where he recounts the Amours of *Cynaras*, *Myrrha*, and *Adonis*.

I ought not to forget *Parthenius* of *Nicæa*, from whom we receive a Collection of Love-Histories, which he inscribes to the Poet *Cornelius Gallus*, in the Reign of *Augustus*. Many of them are drawn from the Ancient Fable, and all from Ancient

Authors, which he cites. Some of them ſeem to be Romantic, and to have been extracted from the *Mileſian* Fables; as that of *Erippe* and *Zanthus*, in the Eighth; that of *Polycrites* and *Diognete*, in the Ninth; that of *Luconoe* and *Cyanippe*, in the Tenth; that of *Neæra* and *Hypſicreon*, and *Promedon*, in the Eighteenth Chapters. For beſides that theſe Adventures are aſcribed to *Mileſian* Perſons, it does not at all appear, that they have been taken either from the Fable, or Ancient Hiſtory. The ſame may be ſaid of the Amours of *Caunus* and *Biblis*, Children of the Founder of *Miletus*, which he reports in the Eleventh Chapter. They are a Fiction of the

Coun-

Countrey which have made it Famous, and have conſecrated it in the Ancient Mythology. This however I offer, as a ſlight Conjecture.

In my Account, I diſtinguiſh the Regular Romances, from thoſe which are not ſo. I call thoſe Regular, which are compoſed after the Rules of an *Heroic* Poem.

The *Greeks*, who have ſo happily improved moſt Arts and Sciences, that they may be reckoned the Firſt Inventors of them, have alſo cultivated the Art of Romances. They have reform'd it from the Rude Dreſs it appeared in among the *Orientals*: They have reduced it into a more Regular Shape, adjuſting

it

it to the Rules of the *Epopee*, and joining those Different Parts into One Compleat Body, which made up the Romances of former Times, without Order or Disposition. Of all the *Greek* Romancers I have named, they who observed these Rules, are only *Antonius Diogenes*, *Lucian*, *Athenagoras*, *Jamblichus*, *Heliodorus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Eustathius*, and *Theodorus Prodromus*. I don't mention *Lucius* of *Patras*, nor *Damascius*, whom I have not enrolled among the Authors of Romances. St. *John Damascenus*, and *Longus*, might easily have reduced their Works under these Laws; but they either were ignorant of them, or despised them. I can't affirm any

any Thing of the Three *Xenophons*, becauſe we have nothing of them left us. Neither can I aſſert any Thing of *Ariſtides*, and thoſe who followed him in Compoſing the *Mileſian* Fables. I believe however, theſe latter confined themſelves to ſome Rules or Meaſures, which I obſerved in the Works Time has preſerv'd to us, which were wrote in Imitation of them, as the *Metamorphoſis* of *Apuleius*, which is regular enough.

Theſe *Mileſian* Fables had been tranſported into *Italy*, long before they had made this Progreſs in *Greece*. They were firſt received among the *Sybarites*, a People Voluptuous to the higheſt Extravagance. This Con-

formity

formity of Humour which they had with the *Mileſians*, eſtabliſhed a reciprocal Commerce of Luxury and Pleaſure, and united them ſo well, that *Herodotus* aſſures us, he knew no People ſo ſtrictly allied. They then learned of the *Mileſians* the Art of Fiction; ſo that the *Sybaritic* Fables were as common in *Italy*, as the *Mileſian* were in *Aſia*. It is not eaſy to determine what was their Model: *Heſychius* informs us, in one Paſſage very much corrupted, that *Æſop* being in *Italy*, his Fables were ſo very well received there, that the People improved upon them; and when they had alter'd them, named them *Sybaritics*; ſo that they became

came a Proverb: But he does not diſcover wherein the Alteration conſiſted. *Suidas* believed, they were like thoſe of *Æſop*; but he is miſtaken in this, as well as many other Places. The Old Commentator upon *Ariſtophanes* ſaith, That the *Sybarites* made uſe of *Beaſts* in their Fables, and *Æſop* of *Men* in his. This Paſſage is certainly corrupted: For as it appears that *Æſop*'s Fables employed *Beaſts*, it follows, that thoſe of the *Sybarites* made uſe of *Men*. He informs us in expreſs Terms, in another Place, that thoſe of the *Sybarites* were pleaſant, and provoked Laughter. I find a Piece of one of them in *Ælian*. 'Tis a little Story, which he ſaith he took

took from the Hiſtory of the *Sybarites*; (I ſuppoſe he means their Fables) You may judge of them by the Story it ſelf.

A Child of Sybaris *going to School along with his Maſter, met in the Street one that ſold Figs, and ſtole one of them from him: The Maſter chiding him, ſnatches the Fig from him, and eats it.*

Theſe Fables were not only facetious, but ſmutty. *Ovid* places the *Sybaritida*, which were compoſed not long before his Time, among the moſt Laſcivious Performances. Many Learned Men believe, that he intends the

the Work of *Hemitheon* the *Sybarite*, which *Lucian* ſpeaks of, as a Maſs of Smuttineſs. This appears to have no Ground: For one can't imagine, that the *Sybaritida* agreed with the Book of *Hemitheon*, in any thing more than the equal Obſcenity of them both; and this was common to all the *Sybaritic* Fables. Beſides this, the *Sybaritida* were compoſed not long before *Ovid*'s Time; whereas the Town *Sybaris* was demoliſh'd by the *Crotoniates* Five Hundred Years before him: So that 'tis more credible, that the *Sybaritida* were compoſed by ſome *Roman*, and received that Name, becauſe they were compoſed in Imitation of the *Sybaritic* Fables. A cer-

certain old Author, whoſe Name I believe you don't much value, gives us to underſtand, that their Style was conciſe and *Laconic*; but all this doth not evince, that they had nothing of the Romance in them.

This Paſſage of *Ovid* makes it clear, that in his Time, the *Romans* had given Admittance to the Fables of the *Sybarites*: And he informs us in the ſame Book, that the Famous Hiſtorian *Siſenna* had tranſlated it from the *Mileſian* Fables of *Ariſtides*. This *Siſenna* lived in *Sylla*'s Time, and was (with Him) of the Great and Illuſtrious Family of the *Cornelians*. He was *Prætor* of *Sicily* and *Achaia*; wrote the Hiſtory of his Country, and

was

was preferred to all the Authors of his Nation, who went before him.

If the *Roman* Commonwealth disdained not the Reading of these Fables, while it retained an Austere Discipline, and Rigid Manners; 'tis no wonder, when it was reduced under the Power of Emperors, and was abandon'd by the Influence of their Example, to Luxury and Pleasure, if it was infected with the Vices which Romance instills into the Mind.

Virgil, who lived a little after the first Rise of the Empire, entertains the *Naiades*, Daughters of *Proteus*, when they were assembled under their Father's Waves, with no other Amuse-

ment,

ment, than a Relation of the Amours of the Gods; which were the Subject of the Romances of Antiquity.

Ovid, *Virgil*'s Cotemporary, makes the Daughters of *Minyas* tell Romantic Tales; giving a Laxation to their Tongues and Wit, when their Hands were employed. The firſt is, of the Loves of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*; the Second, thoſe of *Mars* and *Venus*; the Third is, of thoſe of *Salmacis* for *Hermaphrodite*.

Hence appears the Eſteem Romances had in *Rome*; which is more evident, by the Romance which *Petronius* (one of their Conſuls, and the moſt poliſhed Man of his Time) compoſed. He diſpoſed it into the Form

Form of a *Satyr*, of the ſame Kind which *Varro* invented, interminxing Proſe with Verſe, the Serious with the Jocoſe, and ſtiled it *Menippean*; becauſe *Menippus* had before treated of Serious Matters in a Pleaſant Style.

This Satyr of *Petronius* fails not to be a True Romance: It contains nothing but diverting and ingenious Fictions; tho' they are ſometimes too licentious and immodeſt. He hides under a Diſguiſe a fine and poinant Raillery, againſt the Vices of *Nero*'s Court. What remains of it, are only ſome incoherent Fragments, or rather Collections of ſome induſtrious Perſon; ſo that one can't exactly diſcern the

the Form and Connexion of the whole Piece; tho' it appears to be conducted with Order. And 'tis probable thoſe incoherent Parts, would compoſe a very Compleat Body, with the Addition of thoſe which are loſt. Tho' *Petronius* ſeems to be a very great Critic, and of an exquiſite Taſte in Learning; his Style does not alway advance to the Delicacy of his Judgment: Something of Affectation may be obſerved. In ſome Places he's too Florid and Adorned; and degenerates from that Natural and Majeſtic Simplicity, which ſhined in the *Auguſtan* Age. So true is it, that the Art of Speaking, which is practiſed by all the World, (and what

what very Few underſtand) is yet much eaſier to be underſtood, than practiſed well.

Some ſay, the Poet *Lucan* (who alſo lived in the Reign of *Nero*) compoſed *Saltic* Fables; wherein (ſome think) were recounted the Intrigues of *Satyrs* and *Nymphs*. This agrees well with a Romance, and the Wit of that Age, which was very much inclined to the Amuſements of that Art. But ſince there is nothing left us of it but the Title, and that does not clearly expreſs the Nature of the Work; I ſhall ſay nothing of it.

The *Metamorphoſis* of *Apuleius*, ſo well known by the Name of the Golden *Aſs*, was com-

compoſed under the *Antonines*. It had the ſame Original with the *Aſs* of *Lucian*; ſince it was extracted from the Two firſt Books of *Lucius* of *Patras*: But there is this Difference between them; that theſe Books were abridged by *Lucian*, and augmented by *Apuleius*. The Work of this Philoſopher is Regular: For altho' he ſeems to begin with his Infancy; yet what is there ſaid, is only by way of Preface, and to excuſe the Barbarity of his Style. The true Beginning of his Hiſtory, is at his Voyage into *Theſſalia*. He has given us an Idea of the *Mileſian* Fables in this Piece, which he declares to be of the ſame Sort. He has enriched it with Ele-

Elegant Epiſodes; and among others, with that of *Pſyche*, which no one is ignorant of. He has taken no Care to retrench the Smuttineſs of the Originals which he followed. His Style is that of a Sophiſt, full of Affectation and violent Figures; hard, barbarous, and very becoming an *African*.

Some are of Opinion, that *Clodius Albinus*, a Pretender to the Empire, who was defeated by *Severus*, did not diſdain this Employment. *Julius Capitolinus* reports in his Life, that there were ſeveral *Mileſian* Fables under his Name in very great Reputation, tho' but indifferently compoſed; And that *Severus* reproached the Senate, that they

had commended him for a Learned Man; whereas he attended to nothing but the *Mileſian* Fables of *Apuleius*, and ſpent all his Study in Old Women's Tales, and ſuch other Trifles, and preferred them to more Serious Employments.

Martianus Capella has (like *Petronius*) given the Name of Satyr to his Work; becauſe (like his) 'tis written in Verſe and Proſe; and the Profitable and Entertaining Parts are very agreeably interwoven. His Deſign is to treat of the Arts which have the Appellation of Liberal. Thence he takes a round-about Occaſion, to confer a Perſon upon each of them; and ſuppoſing that *Mercury* (who is

is attended by them) eſpouſes *Philology*, (which is the Love of Good Letters) he gives her whatever is Excellent in them, for a Nuptial Preſent: So that it is a continued Allegory, which properly does not deſerve the Name of a Romance, but rather that of a Fable. For, as I have already obſerved, a Fable repreſents Things which never have, or ever can happen; and a Romance takes Notice of Things which may, but never have happen'd. The Artifice of this Allegory is not very ſubtle; the Style is Barbariſm it ſelf; ſo bold and extravagant in its Figures, that they are unpardonable in the moſt Deſperate Poet. 'Tis diſguiſed with ſo great an

Obſcurity, that 'tis hardly intelligible; otherwiſe 'tis Learned, and full of Notions which are not common.

Some write, that the Author was an *African*: If he was not, his harſh and forced Style would induce one to believe he was of that Country. The Time he lived in is unknown: It only appears he was more Ancient than *Juſtinian*.

Hitherto the Art of Romancing was maintained with ſome Splendor, but it ſoon decayed with Learning and the Empire; when the Furious Nations of the *North* diſſeminated, with their Bodies, the Ignorance and Barbarity of their Minds. Romances were hitherto compoſed for De-

Delight. Fabulous Hiſtories were now introduced, becauſe none were acquainted with the Truth. *Talieſſin*, who lived about the Middle of the Sixth Age, under that King *Arthur* ſo famous in Romances; and *Melkin*, who was ſomewhat younger, writ the Hiſtory of *England*, his Country, of King *Arthur*, and the *Round Table*. *Balæus*, who has put them in his Catalogue, ſpeaks of them, as of Authors filled with Fables. The ſame may be ſaid of *Hunnibaldus Francus*, who (as ſome relate) was Cotemporary with *Clovis*, and whoſe Hiſtory is no other but a Maſs of Lies groſly conceived.

In fine, Sir, we come to the Famous Book of the Exploits of *Charlemagne*; which ſome, with very little Reaſon, aſcribe to the Archbiſhop *Turpin*, tho' he lived above Two Hundred Years after the Tranſactions he relates. *Pigna*, and ſome others, believe, ridiculouſly, that Romances took their Name from the Town of *Rheims*, whereof he was Archbiſhop; becauſe his Book (as *Pigna* relates) was the Original from whence the Romances of *Provence* are derived; and becauſe, according to others, he was one of the Principal Writers of Romances.

How-

However, there are many Hiſtories of the Life of *Charlemagne*, full of Extravagant Fables, like that of *Turpin*. Such were the Hiſtories attributed to *Harcon*, and to *Solcon Forteman*, to *Savard* the Sage, to *Adell Adeling*, and to *John*, Son of the King of the *Friezelanders*. All of them were of that Nation; and are ſaid to have lived in the Time of *Charlemagne*. Such alſo was the Hiſtory attributed to *Occon*; who, according to the common Opinion, was Cotemporary with *Otho* the Great, and had *Solcon* beforementioned for his Great Uncle. Such were thoſe which contained the Atchievements of King *Arthur*, and the Life of *Merlin*.

Theſe Diverting Hiſtories pleaſed the Readers, who were more ignorant than thoſe who compoſed them. They did not, in thoſe Days, trouble themſelves with Reſearches into Antiquity, and after being informed of the Truth of what they wrote. They had the Stuff in their own Head, and went no farther than their own Invention. Thus Hiſtorians degenerated into True Romancers.

In this Age of Ignorance, the *Latin* Tongue, as well as Truth, was neglected and deſpiſed. The Verſifiers, Compoſers, Inventers of Tales, Jeſters, and in ſhort, all of this Country who ſtudied what they called the *Gay Science*, began about the Time of *Hugh Ca-*

Capet, to ſet upon Romancing with great Fury; and ſoon over-ran *France*, by diſperſing them. Theſe Fables were compoſed in the *Roman* Tongue: For formerly, thoſe of *Provence* had more Learning and Poeſy among them, than all *France* beſides. This *Roman* Tongue was that which the *Romans* introduced into *Gaul*, with their Conqueſts. This was corrupted by Time, and the Admiſſion of the *Gauliſh* Language, which was before, amongſt it: So that the *French*, or *Tudeſque*, which followed, was neither *Latin*, *Gauliſh*, nor *French*, but a Medley of them all: However, the *Latin* was predominant in it; and for that Reaſon, it continued to

be called the *Roman*, to diſtinguiſh it from the Particular and Natural Language of each Country; as the *French*, *Gauliſh*, or *Celtique Aquitanic*, *Belgic*. For *Cæſar* writes, that theſe Three Languages were different among themſelves; which *Strabo* explains, as different Dialects of the ſame Language.

The *Spaniards* uſe the Word *Romance* in the ſame Signification with us, and call their ordinary Language by that Name. The *Romain* being then moſt univerſally underſtood, thoſe of *Provence* who apply'd themſelves to Fictions, made uſe of it in their Writings; which from thence were called *Romances*. The Verſifiers travelled about the

the Country, and were very well rewarded for their Labours, and nobly entertained by Perſons of Quality whom they viſited. Some of them would be ſo tranſported with Hearing their Performances repeated, that they would diveſt themſelves of their Robes, to adorn the Poets with them. Thoſe of *Provence* were not the only Perſons who delighted in this Agreeable Amuſement; almoſt every County in *France* had their Romancers, even as far as *Picardy*, which produced their *Servantois*, Pieces treating of Love in a Satyrical way.

From hence proceed the prodigious Number of Old Romances, ſome in Print, others rotting in Private Libraries, the reſt

deſtroy-

deſtroyed by the Length of Time. *Spain* it ſelf, and *Italy*, which have been ſo fruitful in Romances, received the Art of Compoſing them from us. *Giraldi* himſelf reports, "I may ſay, "this Sort of Poeſy had its firſt "Original from the *French*, and "perhaps had its Name from "thence. From them it after-"wards paſſed to the *Spani-*"*ards*; and laſt of all, it was "received by the *Italians*.

The late *Salmaſius*, whoſe Memory I have in ſingular Veneration, both for his Great Learning, and the Friendſhip contracted between us; was of Opinion, that *Spain* having learned the Art of Romancing from the *Arabians*, did by their Exam-

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ple communicate it to the reſt of *Europe*. But to admit this, we muſt aſſent, that *Talieſſin* and *Melkin*, both *Engliſh*, and *Hunnibaldus Francus*, (which are all of them believed to have compoſed their Romances about the Year 550) are more recent, by almoſt 200 Years, than we can imagine. For the Revolt of Count *Julian*, and Entrance of the *Arabians* into *Spain*, happened not till 91 of the *Hegira*, or 712 of our Saviour; and ſome Time muſt be allowed for the Diffuſing of theſe Romances into *Spain*, and for thoſe which (as is pretended) the *Spaniards* made in Imitation of them; to be diſperſed throughout *Europe*. I ſhall not take upon me to main-

maintain the Antiquity of theſe Writers, tho' I have great Authority to do it, becauſe the common and received Opinion would ſupport me. 'Tis certain that the *Arabians* were extremely addicted, as I have made appear, to the *Gay Science*, I mean, Poeſy, Fable, and Fiction. This Science was preſerv'd in its Primitive Rudeneſs by them, till it was cultivated and improved by the *Greeks*. They brought it along with their Arms into *Africa*, when they ſubdued it; tho' it had before flouriſhed in that Country: For *Ariſtotle*, and after him *Priſcian*, make mention of the *Libyc* Fables; and the Romances of *Apuleius* and *Martianus Capella*, both

both *Africans*, (of whom I have ſpoken) ſhew, that it was the Wit of theſe People, which very much conduced to fortify the Victorious *Arabians* in their Inclination.

We are farther inform'd from *Leo Afer* and *Marmol*, that the *African Arabians* do ſtill paſſionately love Romantic Poeſy; that they celebrate the Exploits of their *Buhala* in Verſe and Proſe, as we do thoſe of our *Arthur* and *Lancelot*; that their *Moabites* compoſe Ditties of Love: That in *Fez*, on *Mahomet*'s Birth-Day, the Poets have their Aſſemblies and Public Sports, and repeat Verſes to the People: That whoever of them has the Approbation of the Audi-

tors,

tors, is created Prince of the Poets for that Year: That the Kings of the Houſe of *Benimerinis*, who have Reigned theſe Three Hundred Years, and which our Old Writers called *Bellemarine*, convene on a certain Day every Year the moſt Able Judges of the City of *Fez*, and entertain them with a Splendid Feaſt: after which the Poets repeat their *Eulogiums*, in Honour of *Mahomet*: That the King confers on him who excels the reſt, a Sum of Money, an Horſe, a Slave, and the Robes which himſelf wore that Day; and that none of them are diſmiſſed without a Reward.

Spain

Spain, when it had received the Yoke of the *Arabians*, learnt with their Manners the Cuſtom of Singing Love-Verſes, and Celebrating the Actions of Great Men, after the Inſtitution of the *Bards* among the *Gauls*. But theſe Songs, which they called Romances, were very different from what properly deſerves that Name: For they were Poems compoſed for Singing, and conſequently very conciſe. Some have made Collections of them; and many of them appear to be ſo very Ancient, that they can hardly be underſtood. They have ſometimes ſerved to illuſtrate and explain the Hiſtories of that Country, and to reduce the Events to the Order of Chronology.

nology. Their Romances are much more modern, and not near of ſo old a Date, as our Sir *Triſtram*'s and Sir *Lancelot*'s, by ſome Centuries of Years. *Miguel de Cervante*, one of the Beſt Wits *Spain* has produced, made a Fine and Judicious Critic in his *Don Quixote*: the Curate of *Mancha*, and *Nicholas* the *Barber* could ſcarce find, in ſo vaſt a Number, above Six which were worthy to be preſerved: The reſt are deliver'd *to the Secular Arm of the Old Wife*, to be committed to the Cruelty of the Flames. Thoſe which they thought deſerved to be kept, were the Four Books of *Amadis de Gaul*; which is ſaid

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to be the firſt Romance of Chivalry which was printed in *Spain*, and the Model, and Beſt of all the other.

Palmerin of *England*, which ſome believe was compoſed by a King of *Portugal*, met with an Eaſy Sentence, to be put in a Box like that of *Darius*, wherein *Alexander* kept the Works of *Homer*. Don *Belianis*, the Mirror of Chivalry, *Tirante* the *White*, and *Kyrie Eleiſon* of *Montauban*, (for in thoſe Good Old Times it was believed, that *Kyrie Eleiſon*, and *Paralipomenon*, were the Names of ſome Saints) where the Subtleties of Madam *Pleaſure-of-my-Life*, and the Love and Intrigues of the Widow *Repoſada*, are highly

ly extolled. But all this is Modern, if compared to the Old Romances, which were in all Probability the Models and Originals of theſe, as the Conformity of the Works, and Nearneſs of the Nation may perſuade. He alſo gives his Cenſure upon the Romances in Verſe, and other Poems found in the Library of Don *Quixot*; but this is foreign to our Subject.

If any object, that as we received the Art of Rhyming from the *Arabians*, 'tis credible we had the Art of Romances from them; ſince the greateſt Part of our Old Romances were in Rhyme; and that the Cuſtom of the Perſons of Quality among

mong us, to give their Veſtments to Poets, which continues to this Day in Uſe at *Fez*, confirms this Suſpicion: I anſwer; That it is not impoſſible that we ſhould receive Rhymes from the *Arabians*, and in Imitation of them, apply them to Romances. I'll allow farther, that the Inclination we then had for Romances, might be enhanced and fortified by their Example; and that our Art of Romancing (as is probable) was enriched, and improved, by the Communication of Wars we were engaged in with *Spain*: But all this does not conclude, that we were indebted to them for our Inclination to this Art; ſince 'twas in

Uſe

Uſe with us, before 'twas known among them.

This Reaſon does farther oblige me not to believe, that the Princes of *France* took the Cuſtom of Diveſting themſelves of their Garments, in Favour of the Poets, from the *Arabian* Kings. I rather think, that each of them were affected with the Excellent Works they heard repeated, and could not reſtrain themſelves from diſpenſing their Liberality immediately, and made uſe of their Garments, becauſe they were neareſt at Hand; as we read of ſome Saints, who have done the ſame to the Poor: And that this Cuſtom, which was received into *France* by Accident,

cident, and is continued in *Fez*, may have been introduced into both the Places by Chance.

It is very credible, that the *Italians* were firſt induced to compoſe Romances, by the Examples of thoſe in *Provence*, when the Popes ſat at *Avignon*, and perhaps by that of other Diviſions of the *French*, when the *Normans* and *Charles* Earl of *Anjou*, (Brother to St. *Louis*) a Virtuous Prince, a Lover of Poetry, and a Poet himſelf, made War in *Italy*. For the *Normans* could not refrain themſelves from the Polite Science. Hiſtory reports, they ſung the Exploits of *Roland*, before they got that Memorable Battel, which gave the Crown of *England* to *Willi-*

William the *Baſtard*. All *Europe* was then overwhelmed with Darkneſs and Ignorance, but *France*, *England*, and *Germany* much leſs than *Italy*, which then produced but a ſmall Number of Writers, and ſcarce any Authors of Romances. Thoſe of that Country, who had a Mind to diſtinguiſh themſelves by Learning and Knowledge, came for it to the Univerſity of *Paris*, which was the Mother of Sciences, and Nurſe to the Learning of *Europe*. St. *Thomas Aquinas*, St. *Bonaventure*, the Poets *Danſe*, and *Boccace*, came thither to ſtudy; and the Preſident *Fauchet* produces, that the laſt of them took a great Part of his Novels from *French* Romances,

mances; and that *Petrarch*, and the other *Italian* Poets, have rifled for their Richeſt Fancies, the Songs of *Thibaud* King of *Navarre*, *Gace's Bruſſez*, *Chaſtelain de Corcy*, and the Old *French* Romances. 'Twas then, in my Opinion, that the *Italians* learned from us the Science of Romance; which, by their own Confeſſion, is to be aſcribed to us, as well as that of Rhyming.

Thus *Spain* and *Italy* received from us an Art, which was the Effect of our Ignorance and Barbarity, and which the Politeneſs of the *Perſians*, *Ionians*, and *Greeks* had produced. As Neceſſity engages us, in a Dearth of Bread, to ſuſtain our Bodies

with Herbs and Roots; ſo when the Knowledge of Truth, which is the Proper and Natural Aliment of the Mind, begins to fail, we have Recourſe to Falſhood, which is the Imitation of Truth. As in Plenty we refuſe Bread, and our ordinary Viands, for Ragouſts; ſo our Minds, when acquainted with the Truth, forſake the Study and Speculation of it, to be entertained with its Image, which is Fiction. This Imitation, according to *Ariſtotle*, is often more agreeable than the Original it ſelf; ſo that two oppoſitely different Paths, which are Ignorance and Learning, Rudeneſs and Politeneſs, do often conduct us to the ſame End; which is,

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an Application to Fictions, Fables, and Romances. Hence it is, that the moſt Barbarous Nations are taken with Romantic Inventions, as well as the moſt Refined. The Originals of all the Savages of *America*, and particularly thoſe of *Peru*, are nothing but Fables; no more are thoſe of the *Goths*, which they wrote in their Ancient *Runic* Characters, upon great Stones; the Remains of which I my ſelf have ſeen in *Denmark*. And if any Thing were left us of the Works, which the *Bards* among the Ancient *Gauls* compoſed, to eternize the Memory of their Nation, I don't queſtion but we ſhould find them enriched with Abundance of Fictions.

This Inclination to Fables, which is common to all Men, is not the Reſult of Reaſon, Imitation, or Cuſtom. 'Tis Natural to them, and has its Seat in the very Frame and Diſpoſition of their Soul. For the Deſire of Knowledge is particular to Man, and diſtinguiſhes him from Beaſts no leſs than his Reaſon. Nay we may obſerve in other Creatures ſome Rude Impreſſions of this; whereas the Deſire of Underſtanding is Peculiar to Us only.

The Reaſon of this, according to my Opinion, is; becauſe the Faculties of the Soul are of too Vaſt an Extent, to be ſupplied by the Preſent Objects, ſo that 'tis obliged to have

have recourſe to what's paſt, and to come, in Truth and in Fictions, in Imaginary Spaces and Impoſſibilities, for Objects to exert it ſelf upon. The Objects of Senſe fill the Deſires of the Soul of Brutes, who have no farther Concern; ſo that we can't diſcover in them theſe reſtleſs Emotions, which continually actuate the Mind of Man, and carry it into the Purſuit of a recent Information, to proportion (if poſſible) the Object to the Faculty; and enjoy a Pleaſure, reſembling that which we perceive in the Appeaſing a Violent Hunger, and Extinguiſhing a Corroding Thirſt. This is that which *Plato* intends, in the Marriage of *Do-*

rus and *Penia*, (in which Terms he would expreſs Riches and Poverty,) which produces exquiſite Pleaſure. The Object is ſignified by Riches, which are not ſo but in Uſe and Intention; otherwiſe they are Unfruitful, and afford no Delight. The Faculty is intended by Poverty; which is ſterile, and always attended by Inquietude, while 'tis ſeparated from Riches; whereas its Union with them, ſupplies the Higheſt Satisfaction. The Caſe is the ſame with our Souls: Poverty, the ſame with Ignorance, is Natural to it; it ſighs continually after Science, which is its Riches; and when 'tis poſſeſs'd of this Enjoyment, it feels the greateſt Pleaſure. But this

this Pleaſure is not always equal; it often is the Purchaſe of much Labour and Difficulty: As when the Soul applies it ſelf to Intricate Speculations, and Occult Sciences, the Matter whereof is not preſent to our Senſes; where the Imagination, which acts with Facility, has a Leſs Part in the Purſuit than the Underſtanding, whoſe Operations are more Vehement and Intenſe: And becauſe Labour is naturally tedious, the Soul is not carried to Hard and Spinous Learning, unleſs in Proſpect of ſome Advantage, or Hopes of ſome remote Amuſement, or elſe by Neceſſity. But the Knowledge which attracts and delights it moſt, is that which is acquired without

Pain, and where the Imagination alone acts on Subjects which fall under our Senſe, raviſh our Paſſions, and are great Movers in all the Affairs of Life. Such are Romances, which require no great Intention or Diſpenſe of Mind, to underſtand them. No long Reaſonings are exacted; the Memory is not overburthened: Nothing is demanded, but Fancy and Imagination. They move our Paſſions; but 'tis on purpoſe to ſooth and calm them again: They excite neither Fear nor Compaſſion; unleſs it be to diſplay to us the Pleaſure of ſeeing thoſe we were afraid, or concern'd for, out of the Reach of Danger or Diſtreſs. In ſhort, all our Emotions

tions there find themſelves agreeably provoked and appeaſed.

'Tis hence, that thoſe who act more by Reaſon than Paſſion, and labour more with their Imagination than Underſtanding, are affected by them; tho' theſe other are touched by them too, but after another manner. Theſe are touched by the Beauties of Art, which amuſe the Underſtanding; but the former, Ignorant and Simple, are ſenſible of no more than what ſtrikes upon the Imagination, and ſtirs their Paſſions. They love the Fiction, and enquire no farther. Now Fictions being nothing but Narrations, True in Appearance, and Falſe in Reality; the Minds of the Simple, who diſcern on-

ly the Diſguiſe, are pleaſed and highly ſatisfied with this Shew of Truth. But thoſe who penetrate farther, and ſee into the Solid, are eaſily diſguſted with the Falſity: So that the Firſt love Falſhood, becauſe 'tis concealed under an Appearance of Truth; the Latter are diſtaſted with the Image of Truth, becauſe of the Real Forgery which is couched under it; unleſs it be varniſhed with Ingenuity, Subtilty, and Inſtruction, and recommends it ſelf by the Excellency of Invention and Art. St. *Auguſtin* makes this Obſervation ſomewhere; 'That theſe 'Falſities which carry a Signi-'fication, and ſuggeſt an Hid-'den Meaning, are not Lies, 'but

'but the Figures of Truth; 'which the moſt Wiſe and Ho-'ly Perſons, and even our *Sa-'viour* himſelf, have uſed upon 'Honourable and Pious Occa-'ſions.

Since then 'tis true, that Lies commonly flow from Ignorance, and the Groſsneſs of our Intellect; and that this Inundation of the *Barbarians*, who iſſued from the *North*, ſpread over all *Europe*, and plunged it into ſuch profound Ignorance, as it could not clear it ſelf from, within the Space of Two Ages; is it not then probable, that this Ignorance cauſed the ſame Effect in *Europe*, which it had produced every where beſides? And is it not vain to enquire for that in Chance,

Chance, which we find in Nature? There is then no Reaſon to contend, but that *French*, *German*, and *Engliſh* Romances, and all the Fables of the *North*, are the Fruits of thoſe Countries, and not imported from Abroad: That they never had other Originals than the Hiſtories ſtuffed with Falſities, and made in Obſcure Ignorant Times, when there was neither Induſtry nor Curioſity to diſcover the Truth of Things, nor Art to deſcribe it, if 'twas found: That theſe Hiſtories have been well received by the Unpoliſhed and Half-barbarous People; and that the Hiſtorians thereupon took upon them the Liberty to preſent

ſent them with what was purely forged, which were the Romances.

'Tis a common Opinion, that Hiſtories have formerly been called by this Title, which is ſince applied only to Fictions; which is an Irrefragable Teſtimony that the one proceeded from the other.

"Romances, (ſaith *Pigna*) "according to the Common "Opinion in *France*, were the "*Annals*: And becauſe the Hi- "ſtory of the War, which was "publiſhed ſucceſſively, had "that Name; ſome afterwards "who neglected the Truth, "(howſoever Fabulous they "were) gave their Writings "the ſame Name.

Strabo.

Strabo, in a Paſſage I have already alledged, ſaith, That the Hiſtories of the *Medes*, *Perſians*, and *Syrians*, have deſerved but little Credit; ſince thoſe who wrote them, when they ſaw the Inventers of Fables in great Eſteem, believed they might Eſtabliſh a Reputation, by writing Fables in the Form of Hiſtories, which were the ſame with Romances. Whence we may conclude, that Romances had (in all Probability) the ſame Original with us, which they formerly had with other People.

But to return to the *Troubadours*, or *Trouverres*, (for ſo they called their Poets) of *Provence*,

vence, who were the Princes of Romancing in *France*. Their Myſtery was ſo generally approved of, that all the Counties of *France* had Perſons of that Profeſſion.

The Eleventh Age produced a Matchleſs Number of them, both in Proſe and Verſe. Many of their Works are preſerved, in Spite of the Envy of Time. Of this Number were the Romances of *Garin le Loheran*, of *Triſtram*, *Lancelot*, *Du Lake*, *St. Greal*, *Merlin*, *Arthur*, *Perceval*, *Peneforeſt*, and of moſt of thoſe 127 Poets who lived before the Year 1300, who have received the Cenſure of the Preſident *Fauchet*.

I ſhall

I ſhall not undertake to repreſent them in a Catalogue; nor examine whether the *Amadis de Gaul* were originally from *Spain*, *Flanders*, or *France*; and whether the Romance of *Tiel Ulenſpiegel* be a Tranſlation from the *German*; or in what Language the Romance of the *Seven Wiſe Men of* Greece was firſt written; or that of *Dolopathos*, which ſome ſay was extracted from the Parables of *Sandaber* the *Indian*. Some ſay 'tis to be found in *Greek* in ſome Libraries; which has furniſhed the Matter of an *Italian* Book call'd *Eraſtus*, (and of many of *Boccace* his Novels, as the ſame *Fauchet* has remarked) which was written in *La-*

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tin by *John Morck*, of the Abby *de Hautefelne*, whereof Ancient Copies are to be ſeen; and tranſlated into *French* by the Clerk *Hubert*, about the End of the Twelfth Age, and into *High Dutch* about Three Hundred Years afterwards; and an Hundred Years after that, from *High Dutch* into *Latin* again, by a Learned Hand, who changed the Names of it, and was ignorant that the *Dutch* had come from the *Latin*.

It ſhall ſuffice if I tell you, that all theſe Works which Ignorance has given Birth to, carried along with them the Marks of their Original, and were no other than a Complication of Ficti-

Fictions, groſsly caſt together in the greateſt Confuſion, and infinitely ſhort of the Excellent Degree of Art and Elegance, to which the *French* Nation is now arrived in Romances. 'Tis truly a Subject of Admiration, that we, who have yielded to others the Bays for *Epic* Poetry, and Hiſtory, have nevertheleſs advanced theſe to ſo high a Perfection, that the Beſt of theirs are not Equal to the Meaneſt of ours.

We owe (I believe) this Advantage to the Refinement and Politeneſs of our Gallantry; which proceeds, in my Opinion, from the great Liberty which the Men of *France* allow to the Ladies.

Ladies. They are in a manner Recluſes in *Italy* and *Spain*; and ſeparated from Men by ſo many Obſtacles, that they are ſcarce to be ſeen, and not to be ſpoken with at all. Hence the Men have neglected the Art of Engaging the Tender Sex, becauſe the Occaſions of it are ſo rare. All the Study and Buſineſs there, is to ſurmount the Difficulties of Acceſs; when this is effected, they make Uſe of the Time, without amuſing themſelves with Forms. But in *France*, the Ladies go at large upon their Parole; and being under no Cuſtody but that of their own Heart, erect it into a Fort, more ſtrong and ſecure than

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all the Keys, Grates, and Vigilance of the *Donegnas*. The Men are obliged to make a Regular and Formal Aſſault againſt this Fort, to employ ſo much Induſtry and Addreſs to reduce it, that they have formed it into an Art ſcarce known to other Nations.

'Tis this Art which diſtinguiſhes the *French* from other Romances, and renders the Reading of them ſo Delicious, that they cauſe more Profitable Studies to be neglected.

The Ladies were firſt taken with this Lure: They made Romances their Study; and have deſpiſed the Ancient Fa-

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ble and Hiſtory ſo far, that they now no longer underſtand thoſe Works, from which they received their greateſt Embelliſhments: And leſt they ſhould bluſh at this Ignorance, which they find themſelves ſo often guilty of; they perceive they had better diſapprove what they don't know, than take the Pains to learn it.

The Men, in Complaiſance, have imitated them; condemned what they diſliked, and call that Pedantry, which made an Eſſential Part of Politeneſs, even in *Malherbe*'s Time. The Poets, and other *French* Writers who ſucceeded, have been conſtrained to ſubmit to this Arbitration;

tration; and many of them, obſerving that the Knowledge of Antiquity would be of no Advantage to them, have ceaſed to ſtudy what they durſt not practiſe: Thus a very Good Cauſe has produced an Ill Effect; and the Beauty of our Romances has drawn upon them the Contempt of Good Letters, and conſequently Ignorance.

I don't, for all this, pretend to condemn the Reading of them. The Beſt Things in the World are attended with their Inconveniencies; Romances too may have much worſe than Ignorance. I know what they are accuſed for: They exhauſt our Devotion, and in-

ſpire us with Irregular Paſſions, and corrupt our Manners. All this may be, and ſometimes does happen. But what can't Evil and Degenerated Minds make an Ill Uſe of? Weak Souls are contagious to themſelves, and make Poyſon of every Thing. Hiſtories muſt be forbidden, which relate ſo many Pernicious Examples; and the Fable muſt undergo the ſame Fate; for there Crimes are authoriſed by the Practice of the Gods.

A Marble Statue, which was adored by the Publick Devotion of the *Heathens*, incited the Paſſion, Brutality, and Deſpair of a Young Man.

Cherea,

Cherea, in *Terence*, fortifies himſelf in a Criminal Deſign, at the Sight of a Picture of *Jupiter*, which drew the Reverence of all other Spectators.

Little Regard was had to Sobriety of Manners, in moſt Part of the *Greek* and Old *French* Romances, by Reaſon of the Vice of the Times in which they were compoſed. Even the *Aſtrea*, and ſome others which have followed, are Licentious. But the Modern Romances (I ſpeak of the Good ones) are ſo far from this Fault, that you'll ſcarce find an Expreſſion, or Word, which may ſhock Chaſte Ears, or one ſingle Action which may give Offence to Modeſty.

If

If any one object; That Love is treated of in a Manner ſo Soft and Inſinuating, that the Bait of this Dangerous Paſſion invades too eaſily the Tender Hearts: I anſwer, That it is ſo far from being Dangerous, that it is in ſome Reſpects Neceſſary, that the Young People of the World ſhould be acquainted with it; that they may ſtop their Ears to that which is Criminal, and be better fortified againſt its Artifices; and know their Conduct, in that which has an Honeſt and Sacred End. This is ſo true, that Experience lays before us, that ſuch as are leaſt acquainted with Love, are the moſt unguarded to its Aſ-

faults, that the moſt Ignorant are the ſooneſt decoyed. Add to this, that Nothing ſo much refines and poliſhes Wit; Nothing conduces ſo much to the Forming and Advancing it to the Approbation of the World, as the Reading of Romances. Theſe are the Dumb Tutors, which ſucceed thoſe of the College, and teach us how to Live and Speak by a more Perſuaſive and Inſtructive Method than their's; who deſerve the Complement of *Horace* upon the *Iliad*, 'That it teaches Morality 'more effectually, than the Pre- 'cepts of the moſt Able Phi- 'loſophers.

Mor

Monſieur *D' Urfee* was the firſt who retrieved them from Barbarity, and reduced them to Rules, in his Incomparable *Aſtrea*, The moſt Ingenious and Polite Work which has appeared in this Kind, and which Eclipſed the Glory which *Greece*, *Italy* and *Spain*, had acquired. However, he has not diſcouraged thoſe who come after him to undertake what he has performed. He has not ſo far engroſſed the Public Admiration, but that ſome are ſtill left for the many Excellent Romances which diſplayed themſelves in *France* ſince His.

None can, without Amazement, read thoſe which a Maid, as Illuſtrious in her Modeſty, as her Merit, has publiſhed under a Borrowed Name; depriving her ſelf ſo Generouſly of that Glory which was her Due, and not ſeeking for a Reward, but in her Virtue; as if while She took ſo much Trouble for the Honour of our Nation, She would ſpare that Shame to Our Sex. But Time has done her that Juſtice, which She denied her ſelf; and has informed us, that the Illuſtrious Baſſa, Grand *Cyrus*, and *Clælia*, are the Performances of Madam *de Scudery*: That the Art of making Romances, which might defend

it

nour to be attended to by a Wiſe and Virtuous Maid.

For your Part, Sir, ſince 'tis true, as I have demonſtrated, and *Plutarch* aſſures us, that one of the Greateſt Charms which can affect the Soul of Man, is the Connexion of a Fable, well Invented, and well Related; what Succeſs may you not preſume upon from *Zayde*, where the Adventures are ſo New and Touching, and the Narration ſo Juſt and Polite?

I could wiſh, for the Concern I have for that Great Prince which Heaven has placed over us, that we had an Hiſtory of his

his Wonderful Reign, wrote in a Style ſo Noble, and with the ſame Accurateneſs and Diſcernment. The Virtues which conduct his Reign are ſo Noble, and the Fortune which attends them ſo Surprizing, that Poſterity would doubt whether it were an Hiſtory, or a Romance.

The END.





